

China's seed industry jointly made effort to ensure seeds supply

The Spring Festival in the end of January is the most important holiday for Chinese, it means reunion with family, relatives and friends. But the COVID-19 outbreak is coincided with it. To cope with pandemic, Chinese government took strict and timely measures to stop the spread the virus, people are cooperative with the government's initiative to stay at home.

After the holiday, it was February, the selling season of rice, corn, cotton, wheat and vegetable seeds. But affected by the pandemic, at that time most of the seed companies didn't start work. In order to know the situation of seed industry, China Seed Association conducted a survey covering 1330 seed enterprises from February 10 to 13. The survey shows the pandemic caused negative impact on the production and operation for 90 percent seed enterprises.

And the difficulties seed industry faced mainly include:

1. The transportation and logistics were not smooth. The traffic control made the vehicles can't pass normally. Logistics companies were closed and refused orders, seed companies' cost was increased.

2. Though the production of seeds was completed last year and the amount of major crops seeds were sufficient, up to 90 percent seed enterprises didn't complete seed processing and packaging.
3. Due to the shortage of protective materials such as face masks and disinfectants, companies were unable to start work according to the local prevention and control requirements.
4. Labor shortage, especially the enterprises with intensive vegetable seedling grafting.
5. The salesmen of seed enterprises cannot go to the countryside, marketing activities were difficult to be carried out.
6. The sales shops didn't open as usual, seeds were not available for farmers.
7. For the seed export trade, overall export plan was delayed, the transportation cost was increased, and the shipping and air transportation were slowed down. Some ports of the destination country were closed, the seeds were overstocked after arrival, and the customs declaration speed was slow.

China Seed Association proposed the research report to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA). MARA paid more attention to agricultural inputs.

Government's measures and strategy

The State Council issued a series of documents demanding that agricultural and animal husbandry production should be well carried out in spring. Measures need be taken to ensure the production, supply and

transportation of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and feed. Accelerate the resumption of production of agricultural companies, establish a green channel for the transportation of agricultural inputs, such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and feeds. Then, the Ministry of transport and MARA issued the urgent notice, implemented the green channel policy, and guaranteed the agricultural inputs transportation. Encourage logistics enterprises to return to work.

The government also supplied financial support to enterprises in key fields, including agricultural enterprises, to guarantee their working capital.

On February 25, MARA set up the national emergency dispatch and supply group of agricultural materials, kept close eye on the demand for seeds, fertilizers and pesticides, and shared the data with local agricultural departments. For some seeds in shortage, the national and provincial seed reserves were supplied. China Seed Association is a member of this group and plays a significant role in ensuring seed supply.

Seed enterprises' solutions

The seed enterprises adopt flexible employment and telecommuting. Prepare face masks and disinfectant for staff, ensure a safe distance of more than 1 meter, provide a safe working environment. At present, seed processing is basically completed.

The seed enterprises adopt telemarketing, open online shopping mall, and conduct product introduction and technical training through live web

cast. With the resumption of logistics enterprises, the problem of seed transportation is basically solved.

China Seed Association plays a bridging role, i.e., works together with province seed associations, follows the difficulties seed enterprises encountered, reports them to MARA, and coordinates seeds supply. China Seed Association has 14 committees, they also play an important role. Such as soybean committee, they carried out 40 public welfare technical lectures online since February 1, benefiting more than 1.8 million members and farmers.

At present, China's seed industry has returned to normal, runs well. Early season rice in the South has been sown, followed by middle season rice, corn, potatoes, cotton and vegetables.

China Seed Association

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